



PUNCH

OR
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCII No. 5284

June 3 1942

Charivaria

"THE FUEHRER kept the world guessing as to exactly where he would launch his spring offensive," says a Nazi broadcaster. And exactly which spring.

An Italian newspaper recently stated that the Italian people have got very little out of the war. The Italian people complain that they haven't got out of the war at all.



A Government spokesman finds that the people are learning to economize. Similarly, men have been known to learn to swim after falling off a pier.

A correspondent says he has never ridden a horse before, but now he trots each day to his place of business instead of going by train. One advantage is that he gets a seat for at least half of the journey.

MUSSOLINI, according to a neutral correspondent, would welcome a separate peace. Especially with Italy.

There was rather a scene after GOEBBELS had made an announcement to a gathering of neutral journalists in Berlin recently. It appears that the representatives both wanted to use the same telephone-booth.

"BIG CUTS IN RAIL DINING CARS"
Headline in "Evening News."

But not from the joint.

Burglars who posed as Gestapo officials ransacked a house in Berlin. The householder began to suspect they were impostors when they didn't shoot him.

According to a usually reliable source, the Italians say they would have ended the war long ago if they had not been greatly outnumbered by the Germans.

Admitting reverses in the Kharkov sector, Berlin radio attributes some of them to the Russians' "particular fury." Their General TIMOSHENKO would account for the others.

Little enthusiasm is expressed in Rome about a report that LAVAL has offered Italy Martinique and Madagascar in lieu of Nice and Corsica.

Hotel waiters who wait at the tables of Nazi officials in Paris are to have distinctive uniforms. No doubt the waiters insisted on this.



The German peoples, states Berlin propaganda, are fighting for one common object. Perhaps that doesn't sound so uncomplimentary in German. . . .

"I suppose," remarks a correspondent, "that during his absence from the Brains Trust, Dr. JOAD will read up the answers to everything." This is not necessary; but he may check up on everything by the severe standard of what he knows about it.



"EVERYBODY WILL GET TOMATOES
6 to 7lbs. Per Head Aimed At."
Headings in Southern Paper.

Is this a threat?

A colonel who challenged a corporal to a game of darts beat him. You can always trust an N.C.O. to keep his head in an emergency like that.

Justice

I DO not think we should be taught to hate
 Nor visit on the Germans our revenge,
 They have not tied our women to a gate
 Nor sacrificed our children at Stonehenge.

The nobler attitude, I understand,
 When sticking other persons with a spike
 Is something in between a reprimand
 And disapproval verging on dislike.

The admonition of a tumbling bomb
 That sends their cities up in flame and smoke
 Is far more suitable to Christendom
 Than getting angry with the *Herrenvolk*.

But some men do not feel the same as I:
 The Poles, whose villages have been destroyed,
 Whose wives and children have been forced to die,
 Are, so they tell me, dreadfully annoyed.

The ruined Dutchmen and the Belgians too
 Remembering how their farms and towns were sacked
 Have often very little else to do
 But voice their strong resentment of the fact.

I must remember, though I bear no grudge,
 That half-starved peasants underneath his hoof
 Have far more opportunities to judge
 Whether or no the Hun deserves reproof.

I must be well prepared to lay aside
 My English prejudice, when comes the Peace,
 And let the case for damages be tried
 By the impartial patriots of Greece.

EVOE.

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Prelude to Battle School

THE lorries have not yet arrived to take us to the grisly business of Battle School. A number of officers have gravitated unconsciously towards the Mess. Lieutenant Tinkle, who is well up in these things, having been born under a special A.C.I., says that Captain Hackett, as the senior officer present, is entitled to call for the first round of the day.

Captain Hackett takes this very well. He says that he will arrange it like a shot. He has been on a lot of courses lately and is very efficient. He says that now he always treats a matter of this kind as if it were a military problem. It will not take him a tick to jot down a few heads in his notebook—Information, Intention, Method and so on—and get the arrangements made.

Perhaps it is a pity we did not buy our own drinks.

Lieutenant Crasher, of the Commandos, is boasting the Battle School. It appears that he is an instructor. He says that what we will like about it is that later on we will be allowed to fire live ammunition at one another. It seems

that a lot of Home Guards are not allowed to do this, so we must look on it as an honour.

Second-Lieutenant Whoopit, of the Alliance Knitting and Forwarding Co.'s Works Unit, says that it is a pity that he could not bring some of his firm's vans down to the School, as they are now all fitted with flame-throwers and it would add a touch of colour to things. He says that their customers do not mind so much now that they have stopped them from going off accidentally.

Lieutenant Crasher says that he might be able to fix that later, but in the meantime only his Commandos will be allowed to fire at us. He says that his men have been practising hard and can now get very near to you without hitting. They would be better still if they were allowed to use the accurate rifles.

Captain Hackett has drawn up his operation orders and is explaining them carefully to the Mess Caterer, so perhaps we will get drink after all.

Lieutenant Crasher says that one of the things that will make us laugh is the way some people duck. It seems that the real joke about this is that most of the rifles fire low.

Lieutenant Wiggle says that the difference with Montezuma was that he cut them open afterwards and foretold the weather from the entrails, but Lieutenant Crasher says that he does not think this would be allowed as it might help the enemy.

Captain Hackett is going over the final details of Administration and Communications with the Mess Caterer and we should get our drinks any time now.

Lieutenant Crasher says that another thing that will make us laugh is the way the trick mines have been planted all over the Battle School ground. It seems that some of them are arranged to go up almost under your nose. Lieutenant Wiggle says that he thinks it is a mistake to make us laugh too much as it may take our minds off the work. Life ought not to be one long fun-fair.

Lieutenant Bumper, the Battalion Transport Officer, says that he has arranged for the same number of lorries to bring us back and so he hopes there will not be many casualties as the R.A.S.C. will get very shirty if the lorries come back half-empty.

Lieutenant Crasher says that it is funny to think that in an hour or so we will have bullets whizzing about our heads. Lieutenant Wiggle says that if that is as funny as he can think he should give up trying to be a laughing philosopher and concentrate on teaching his men to shoot straight; but Lieutenant Crasher says that it is all right: they are shooting as straight now as they ever will with those rifles.

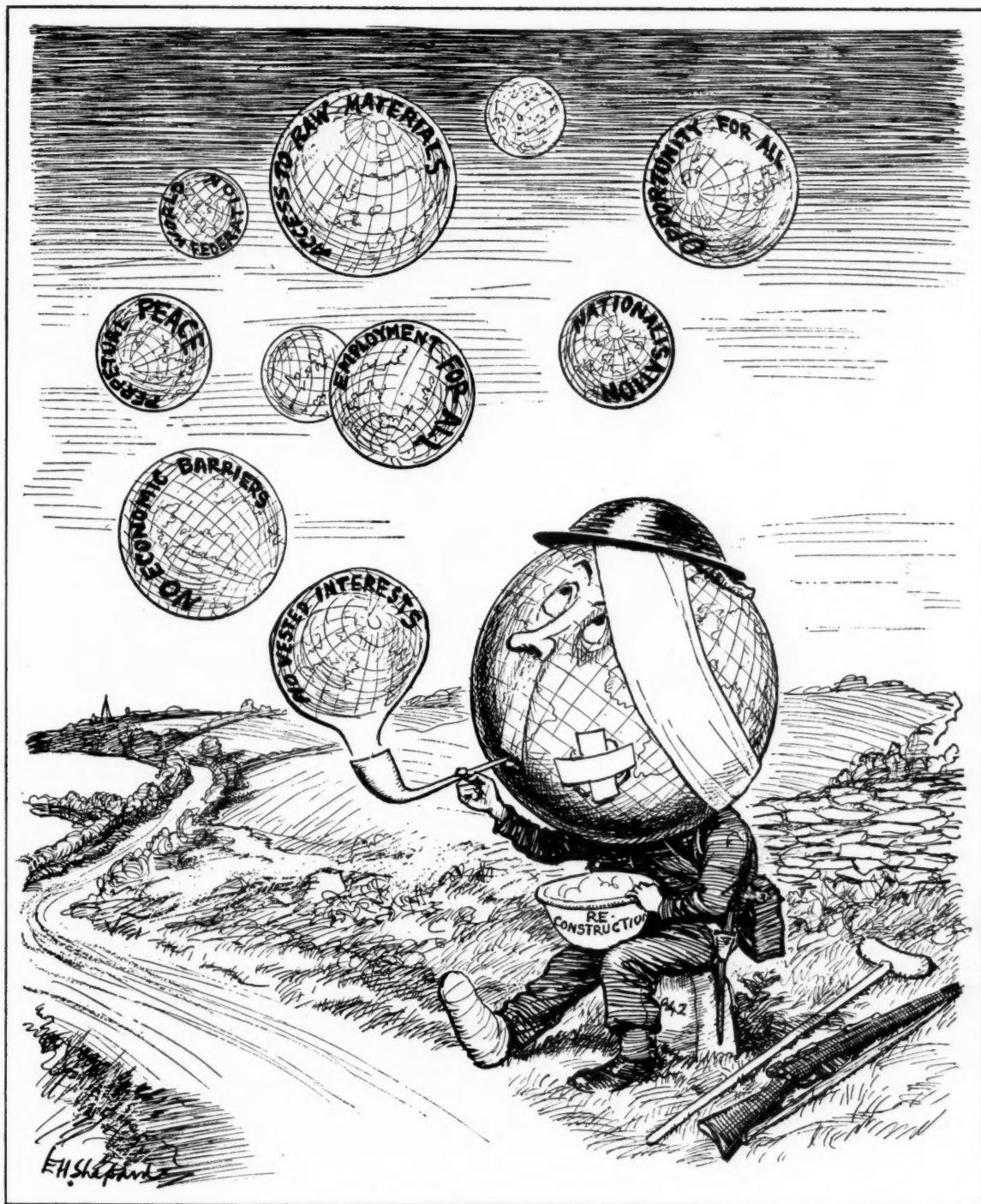
The Quartermaster says that he wishes he was coming with us as it ought to be fun. He is putting a couple of old Union Jacks on the lorries in case, but we are not to use them unless we need to.

Captain Hackett has completed the operation successfully and the beer has reached us. So have the lorries. Lieutenant Bumper says that we must debus and march the last mile, because the R.A.S.C. will not allow the lorries to enter the Battle School area. It seems that spares are very difficult to get and they are very strict about it.

Lieutenant Crasher says that this is a pity as his men have been looking forward to a crack or two at the lorries and are apt to get out of hand when vexed. A. M. C.

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"To-morrow (Saturday) the Rector of G—— (the Rev. G—— W——) is to sit in the porch of the church from 1.30 a.m. until 7.30 p.m. to receive gifts in connection with the fund designed to provide a church hall." —*Yorkshire Paper*.
 Evidently determined to catch the milkman.



GREAT EXPECTATIONS



"You can say I registered six weeks ago and I'm waiting to give them an interview."

The Mutts' Trust

THE Chairman. Listeners have so long had the benefit of the courteous, accurate and brilliant answers of the Brains Trust that they are now, we are informed, beginning to weary of perfection. The B.B.C. therefore have decided for the next year or two to organize a Duds' Trust, consisting of the first five ordinary mutts we meet at the Blue Moon on Monday evenings, while passing from the Private to the Public Bar—and vice versa.

The first question is from Leading Aircraftwoman Bunn. She says: What is the meaning of "Spring" Tides?

Smith. Well, I dunno, guv'nor. I've always thought they was the tides what come in the Spring, same as Spring onions.

Brown. I don't think that's right.

Smith. Well, then, what's the idea of calling 'em Spring tides if they ain't Spring, tell me that?

Jones. I know there's always a very high tide about May, because I live at Chiswick and it comes over the road—into the garden, sometimes.

Smith. There you are, then! What did I say?

Jones. But we have high tides in October, too, and then it comes into the basement.

Robinson. Perhaps there's Spring tides, and Autumn tides, see?

Smith. I never heard of no Autumn tides.

Robinson. There's tides all the year round, ain't there?

Smith. Yus, but I never heard of

no Autumn tides, not to say, *Autumn* tides.

Robinson. I tell you there's tides all the year round!

Smith. No offence, pal. All I said was—

Robinson. Didn't you say—

Chairman. Order, please! Thompsonson?

Thompson. I dunno. I never get the hang of the tides.

Smith. Don't be so ignorant. It's the moon, ain't it?

Robinson. What d'you mean—the moon?

Smith. What I say.

Robinson. I don't believe the moon ain't got nothing to do with it. Ever been to Sahthend?

Smith. 'Course I been to Sahthend.

Robinson. Ever seen the tide go out there a couple of miles?

Smith. Not a couple of miles. Don't be silly.

Robinson. Well, it looks like it. One mile, anyway.

Smith. All right. One mile. No offence, pal. I seen it.

Robinson. Well, was there a moon?

Smith. Not that I remember.

Robinson. Well, there wasn't, not the night I was there. Not a sign of it.

Jones. Just because you can't see the moon, it don't follow it ain't there.

Robinson. All right. Suppose it was there. What's it do?

Smith. Why, it draws the water along behind it as it goes up the river, of course.

Robinson. All right. What happens when it gets to the top?

Smith. What gets to the top?

Robinson. The moon.

Smith. Top of what?

Robinson. Top of the river. Well, I mean, say—

Jones. Chiswick, say. I live at Chiswick. What happens is—

Smith. Shut up. Why, when it gets to the top it comes back, of course.

Robinson. The water?

Smith. Yus.

Robinson. And what about the moon? Does that come back?

Smith. Nah.

Robinson. Why don't the water stay where it is, then?

Smith. Where?

Robinson. Why, where the moon took it, according to you. If the water goes up there because of the moon, you'd think it'd stay there till the moon come back, wouldn't you?

Smith. Nah.

Robinson. Why not?

Smith. Well—it's like this, you see.

Jones. May I speak? I live at Chiswick.

Smith. Go ahead, pal.

Robinson. You're beat, you see.

Smith. Beat nothing! But he's got a right to speak, ain't he? Come on, mate. Answer him.

Jones. Well, I don't know about the moon, but I know it's up-hill, you see.

Robinson. Up-hill what?

Jones. Well, it's up-hill from Southend to Chiswick, isn't it? So when the moon goes away, of course the water runs down-hill again. That's what I've always understood.

Robinson. That's right.

Smith. What d'you mean—"That's right"? You never said nothing like that before.

Robinson. All right. Supposing I didn't? That don't make it wrong, do it?

Smith. Nah. No offence, pal. But he's right. Come to think of it, how would you get water to run up-hill if it wasn't for the moon or something?

Robinson. I don't believe it. Not a word of it.

Smith. All right. Well, suppose the moon goes the other way. Try that!

Robinson. Which way?

Smith. Why, down the river, see? Instead of up.

Jones. All right. What about it?

Smith. Well, what would happen?

Jones. Well, I suppose, the tide'd go out—

Smith. And stay out! Because it can't run up-hill, you see, not without the moon.

Robinson. Well, I don't believe the moon's got nothing to do with it.

Smith. It's no good arguing with a bloke like you. I prove you're talking offal, and you just start again.

Robinson. Who says I'm talking offal?

Jones. Here—

Smith. No offence, pal. I'm very fond of offal myself.

Jones. Here, can you clever gents explain this? How is it you can have the tide going both ways at the same time?

Robinson. Oh, yes? And I suppose your old moon's popping backwards and forwards keeping an eye on both of 'em?

Smith. Don't be silly.

Jones. It's a fact. Look. I got this

from a man off a tug. He says if it's high tide at Southend at 12 o'clock it's high tide at London Bridge at half-past one.

Smith. Go on?

Jones. Fact. And Kew Bridge about a quarter-past two. And Richmond Bridge—

Robinson. Here, chuck it, you're making me giddy.

Smith. That's all right. That's the moon coming up the river, you see.

Jones. Ah, but I says: Well, what happens at 1 o'clock? Well, he says, if you're at Kew Bridge the tide's coming in at about three miles an hour; and if you're at Southend the tide's going out about three miles an hour.

Robinson. And where's the moon?

Smith. Shut up. You're talking offal, pal.

Jones. Fact. And, he says, any day, if you could stand on Kew Bridge and London Bridge at the same time, you could see the tide going opposite ways.

Smith. Don't be silly, pal. If you had the water going both ways for a couple of hours there wouldn't be no water left in the middle at all!

Chairman. That, it is generally believed, is the explanation of the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites. The next question—

Robinson. Well, anyhow, it shows it's not got nothing to do with the moon.

Chairman. Anyhow, I trust that Aircraftwoman Bunn has now a much fuller understanding of the tides than she had. The next question comes from Bombardier Thomas, of Micheldever. He asks: What is the difference between snow and hail? Smith?

Robinson. Keep the moon out of it, mate. A. P. H.

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Laughing Soldier

COURAGE and Fortitude are lovely words,
And lovely are the virtues they define;
Yours was the Courage, Laughing Soldier, may
The Fortitude be mine. A. W. B.

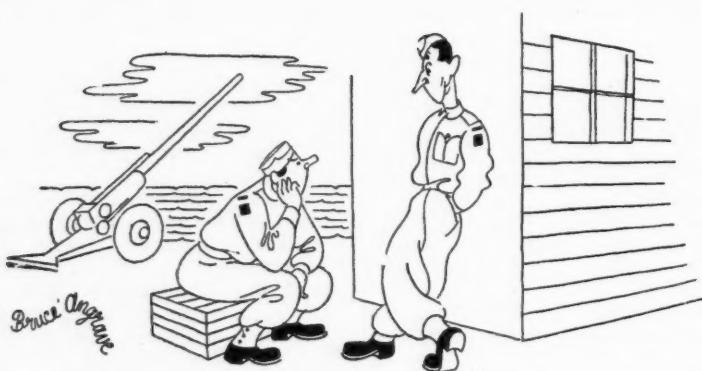
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Hint to the First Lord

"An Army flier, First Lieutenant James V. Edmundson, of Santa Monica, Calif., received credit for the third sinking revealed yesterday. Secretary Knox announced that he sighted and destroyed a submarine in the Hawaiian area on Jan. 16."—*N.Y. Paper*.

ANOTHER

National Waste Paper Contest, on the same lines as the successfully record-breaking one held in January, began on May 1st and closes on July 31st. There are several differences in the conditions. This time boroughs are competing only with boroughs, urban councils with urban councils, and rural councils with rural councils. The total prize-money to be won is £10,000, £2,500 of it in Scotland. The winners will be those local authorities that collect the heaviest weight of waste paper per thousand of the population; and the disposal of the prizes this time is left to the entire discretion of the local authorities concerned. But it is likely that you will still be helping your local charities, as well as the war effort, by SAVING ALL WASTE PAPER



"I wish I could read the magazine that was collected for salvage and made into the cartridge wads for the ammunition in the box I'm sitting on."

The Parting of the Ways

REFERRING to the well-known friendship between Cousin Florence and Miss Littlemug, several of us have frequently said: David and Jonathan. Miss Pin, who has—as she herself says—absorbed the classics almost without knowing it from her employer, Mr. Pancatto, has referred to Damon and Pythias, and Mrs. Pledge has rather confused the issue with Scylla and Charybdis.

Anyway, it must be obvious that the friendship of Cousin Florence and Miss Littlemug has long been an accepted fact in Little Fiddle-on-the-Green—and indeed beyond it, quite as far as Bottleby-St. Ogg (where, in happier days, they sometimes walked together to the Olde Bunne Hatch for tea) and Fiddle Magna (where they made joint appointments with the oculist).

Naturally this friendship, like all others, has had its ups and downs. Long ago—in the days when one gave an order to the tobacconist instead of pleading with him passionately for five loose cigarettes of a make that one didn't like at a price that one couldn't afford—there was tension over a commission executed by Cousin Florence for Miss Littlemug, on behalf of her Uncle Joseph, when Cousin Florence had gone to stay with a dear old friend of her schooldays living in Stoke Newington.

The strong point of Cousin Florence has never been her arithmetic, and to the very end she was unable to explain a deficit of sevenpence in the transaction. As she said herself, she would

willingly have paid it twelve times over (if anyone had been at hand to tell her what that would come to), but Miss Littlemug kept saying, No, it was the principle of the thing. Her dear father had been a thoroughly scrupulous man of honour. And Cousin Florence felt, and said, that whatever insults were offered to her were as nothing, but aspersions flung upon the memory of her own father, who had, after all, been a Rural Dean, were more than she could be expected to endure.

It lasted all one summer, and Cousin Florence told Laura that, whatever else she was, she was not, and never had been, a convicted felon, and Miss Littlemug assured Miss Dodge that faults she might have, but crass brutality was not amongst them.

After the reconciliation—effected by Canon Pramm, Mrs. Battlegate, and both the Misses Dodge at a small tea-party held late in September—no disturbing incident occurred until a very unfortunate game of bridge at the house of old Lady Flagge.

Not having been present, one is not in a position to judge the full significance of Miss Littlemug's failure to return Cousin Florence's lead in a doubled No-Trump hand, but it has never been in dispute that Cousin Florence's ace, queen, knave and ten of clubs were thereby rendered worthless.

Miss Plum let it be known, in confidence, that by the end of the afternoon—which extended far into the evening—tears had been shed by

everyone present except Mrs. Battlegate, to whom weeping is unknown.

Miss Plum herself took Miss Littlemug home, and Laura, instead of just seeing Cousin Florence into her bus, had to go with her to her very door, and eventually beyond it into the drawing-room-half of the living-room, and stay there until past ten o'clock.

But there again, Cousin Florence and Miss Littlemug were eventually brought together again, and they each said, quite independently, that life was too short to quarrel, and what were we all here for if not to forgive and forget?

So that one felt startled, as well as pained, when it became known—as it did all over the parish in the space of some four and a half minutes—that Cousin Florence and Miss Littlemug had, in the phrase that now comes so naturally to everyone's lips, broken off relations. And Aunt Emma was by no means the only person to say: "But what, dear, is it all about?"

Actually it was the direct result of a week-end visit that Cousin Florence paid to Miss Littlemug when she felt that if she didn't get away from her evacuees for a time, however short, she would turn into a raging lunatic, and very likely they would too.

And from this week-end Cousin Florence went home with Miss Littlemug's green rubber hot-water bottle instead of her own green rubber hot-water bottle. They were, as Cousin Florence maintains to this day, exactly alike. The only difference—and this was stressed by Miss Littlemug—was that the one Cousin Florence left behind her began to leak next day, whereas the one she took home didn't.

Of course, with the present world-situation what it is, together with Cousin Florence's rather implacable attitude as to returning the green hot-water bottle, it looks as though peace would have to be achieved in Europe before one can hope that it will also prevail in the relationship of Miss Littlemug and Cousin Florence.

In the meanwhile any progress made in the course of the day by such intermediaries as Miss Pin, Canon Pramm, Laura, and both the elder and the younger Miss Dodge, is invariably rendered null and void at night when Miss Littlemug bruises her shin against a large stone hot-water bottle.

E. M. D.
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"At the General's invitation we returned later to drink whisky and water by dim lantern light under tropic stars, and had the satisfaction of replacing his nearly empty wottle with one brought from Calcutta."

Daily Paper.

Not quite enough water, perhaps?

"Gentlemen, Please!"

WELL, if this," said the man who had just come back, "ain't rich!"

He slapped his newspaper with one hand, and with the other he knocked his khaki cap to the back of his head.

"A magistrate has had a man up in front of him for misbehaving on the football field, and he says: 'Any man who disputes the referee is not a sport.' Sometimes," he concluded bitterly, "I give this country up."

He knocked out his pipe, tossed his head once or twice, and looked about him for support.

"I fear," said the man in the corner, looking over his glasses, for he knew what the other meant, "the M.C.C. has much to answer for in that respect. They always insisted, you know, that there were only two things you could do in any situation: one wasn't cricket and the other was."

"Well, now," snapped the other, pointing, "the people what didn't play cricket are up against them what did, and look at the result. A pity they never give the umpire a chair at Lord's! Someone could have kicked it away as he was going to sit down and shaken this country up. We was nearly saved once," he mentioned almost grudgingly, "when we took to all-in wrestling, mind you! That gave us the chance to do what every little nipper has wanted to do since he first had a nanny what was determined to see fair-play at his parties—that was to sock the referee." He looked out of the window and he laughed ironically. "We was all kept under so long that it become a complex, and all-in wrestling came as a safety-valve to all of us. There was a game what you could not only sock the referee at, if you wished, but he was paid to accept the socking. It was psychology," he said with a gesture—"just like the stall at the fair where you relieve your feelings for a dollar by smashing up the kitchen china. Well, they stopped all-in wrestling, and no sooner had they done it than Germany saw how things were going, buttoned up her jacket and declared war in our faces."

"Actually," said the man in the corner, still looking over his glasses, "they are teaching all-in wrestling now, you know, only they call it 'Unarmed Combat.' On one part of the barrack square they teach the guard ceremonial drill, and on the other they show the recruit how to creep up behind the guard and slit his throat, get his rifle away and kick him in the eye while he is on the ground."

THE MERCHANT NAVY

FROM America comes news of further steps to share the burden of the Merchant Navy in the Battle of Supply. Remember, it is to the sacrifices of these sailors that you owe many of the comforts of civilized life which you still enjoy.

In return, will you not contribute to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND? A gift to this Fund enables you to express your gratitude in tangible form. You owe it to our sailors to see that they are well provided with extra comforts. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouvierie St., London, E.C.4.

"Then perhaps they are beginning to realize," said the other, "it ain't no use joining a public-house brawl in Glasgow of a Saturday night and offering to shake hands first. In which case, what's this pompous ass mean, laying it down that anyone what disputes the referee is not a sport? He must be a fifth columnist!"

"I am in full agreement," said the other with a reassuring gesture. "Only the other week-end we had a tactical

exercise; and they have umpires on those stunts, too, you know. They wear a white band on each arm, and they tell you when you have been wiped out by 'token' machine-guns. As soon as they have packed you off behind a hedge—dead—to have a cigarette, they take off one white band, which turns them back into the enemy, and the next thing is they themselves are opening fire on your chaps attacking up the slope. If you can't dispute an umpire of that sort . . ."

The other pointed with the stem of his pipe.

"I would like to see anyone in the real thing take any notice of a ruddy umpire what told a fellow he was dead. I myself heard one N.C.O. saying quiet-like to a fellow what was staggering, 'Lie down, chum, you got a proper packet.' But the fellow went on walking forward just the same, with his head blown off; I suppose he had always wanted to defy the rules once, if it was the last thing he did. There's nothing the other side would like better in this war than that we did have umpires, so they could dress up and pretend to be them, like the ones you got on your tactical exercise. You give the bloke what this beak had up in front of him to me. If he'll dispute any umpire what tells him we're beaten and what wants him to get off the field and stay off, I'll have him on my side, this most historic summer, gladly, boy; and chance the ducks. Then we may win."



Notes on a Future Occasion

(From an official leaflet)

... On page 5 only (*not* on pages 4 or 6) the instruction "Write in block letters" is to be disregarded, but the lower half of page 6 is to be filled in, in red ink.

Red ink for this purpose is obtainable free of charge at any post office, but applicants must take their own bottles.

* * * * *

(Broadcast announcement)

... Anyone genuinely unable to obtain a bottle in any other way will be allowed to choose a suitable one from the nearest salvage dump to the place of residence (*not* the place of business) on presentation of a card No. FB-A/1, which must be applied for before June 30. The supply of such cards cannot be guaranteed after this date.

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(From a newspaper)

... The card No. FB-A/1 is marked "Fill in both sides," but it must be filled in on *one side only* because the back will be used for stamping when the bottle is returned. People whose cards are still unstamped by the end of July will be called on to pay not more than sixpence for the bottle, unless on its return to the nearest post office to the place of business (*not* the place of residence) it is found still to contain not less than five cubic centimetres of red ink in usable condition.

The presence of any kind of mud in the ink will disqualify it and the holder will not be able to claim any compensation, *except* in the case of builders' labourers, road-sweepers, and other manual workers whose work exposes them to accumulations of dust.

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(Broadcast announcement)

... A list of the trades labourers in which will be entitled to claim for returned red ink even if there is mud in it will be displayed in all post offices from next Monday.



MAURICE MCLoughlin

"Madam like to see Sphinx, Pyramids, Pharaoh's tombs, secret munition dumps?"

Postmasters should apply for it at once, as it cannot be sent to them by post after to-morrow night. After that it must be personally applied for at branch food offices between the hours of 10.30 A.M. and 2 P.M.

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(From a newspaper)

... Postmasters unable by reason of age or infirmity to apply in person between those times may (a) send as deputy a member or members of their own family over the age of sixteen, or (b) apply before 10.30 or after 2. They must send or bring copies of not more than two doctors' certificates in support of their claim to be either aged or infirm (but not both).

* * * * *

(Broadcast announcement)

... Postmasters claiming to be both aged and infirm—some people are never satisfied—must write stating so before June 25th. They will receive by return a printed card, to be hung above the counter in the post office, explaining to the public the reason for the absence of the official list of trades that would have been hung there if the postmaster had not been too aged and infirm to apply for it in the correct way.

* * * * *

(From a newspaper)

... People who find this card hung in the post office instead of the official list of trades will be told at once, on demand, of the nearest post office at which the list is on view. If the distance then to be travelled is more than five miles, they will be entitled to ask the aged and infirm postmaster to reimburse them for the necessary travel by bus or train, although he will not be entitled to do so.

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(Newspaper report)

To-day, the first day for applying for the new nutmegs ration books, branch offices of the Ministry of Food were crowded to the doors at an early hour.

Most of the delay was caused by members of the public who had not filled in the third line on the application form. This is the line prefaced by the words "For office use only—do not fill in."

Others had failed to complete page 7 correctly or had written in a foreign language. Many people were found to have misunderstood the instructions not to write in block letters on page 5, and had filled in every page in shorthand, or Arabic.

About half the applicants had cut the form into strips with scissors. These were asked to wait in an adjoining room, if there was an adjoining room, but many of them began trying to climb out of the windows, and in thirty-five sub-offices in the London area they set fire to some of the furniture.

In many places queues stretched hundreds of yards both up and down stairs, and fights were frequent. Some arrests were made, but this was probably a coincidence.

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(From a newspaper)

A man describing himself as an "aged and infirm postmaster" was to-day fined £700 for charging three-farthings too much for a nutmeg.

R. M.



Industrial Relations

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THERE is to-day an alarming tendency to regard industrial production merely as a matter of machine-hours and supply. The layman imagines that the human element has been eliminated; that the factory operative is an unthinking, unemotional robot. Nothing could be further from the truth—as any industrial psychologist without a private income will tell you. Every day the industrial welfare officers and the scientific management experts fight a thousand Battles of Britain. They and they alone must continue the equal struggle against the phobias and other mental maladies which so often afflict our war-workers. It is a never-ceasing vigil and one never more clearly defined than in this further series of unedited documents extracted from the Suggestions Box of the Snacker and Dipocket Small Things Co. (1928), Ltd.

Shop-foreman James Dolphin writes: "Please find enclosed a claim for £11 17s. 6d. (including Purchase Tax), being a sum disbursed by me in the purchase of one 3-valve radio set. A few weeks ago Mechanic L. 7710 complained that his work was suffering because he felt that the war would be over by August and that his tank fittings would never be used. I tried (as set out in Official Handbook for Under-Managers No. 5, New Series) to effect a cure by the frequent mention of fictitious news items such as: 'They've just sunk twenty-three more of our aircraft-carriers,' 'Chimboragua is now at war with us,' and 'There's a surplus of butter in Berlin.' I regret to say that this method failed, whereupon I acquired the radio set and invited the sufferer to listen to Deutschlandsender DFA. While I cannot claim that his output has increased, he appears to be much happier and his health is improving."

"Owing to circumstances beyond my control," writes Mr. Noel Maltshovel, the well-known poet (now a cotton-waste collector in Depth Charge Dept. 3A), "I find myself in a condition of embarrassing impecuniosity. I have not much of a head for figures, but I understand that a sum of £27 2s. 7d. stands to my account in post-war credit. If, sir, you would approach the Government about this matter on my behalf I should be extremely grateful. I am suggesting that the credit amount should be paid to me now and

that my income-tax contributions should be deferred until after the war. The advantages of the scheme to the Government are obvious enough. The National Debt would be reduced and a new and reliable asset would be acquired."

The next note is rather pointless. It pleads, "Remember Marston Moor!" and is signed "Well-Wisher."

"I work a sixty-six-hour week," writes Arthur S. Sackbut, "and I am as keen as mustard on beating Hitler and his gang. Last Wednesday I left my bench for one minute on a perfectly natural errand and returned to find Mr. Dipocket standing by my machine with a face as black as thunder. He then said, 'Absenteeism is sabotaging the war effort.' This is to inform you that I am taking the matter up with the union."

Next comes a note from a Mr. Tom Brackett. He writes: "I have been working for some weeks in the new underground factory and I feel I must ask for a transfer. You will probably think me silly when I tell you the reason. My job is rather monotonous and my mind tends to wander. Last week I rode three full circuits on the conveyer-belt (and lost twelve hours' pay) under the impression that I was back at Sloane Square Station. If a transfer is impossible perhaps you would be good enough to paint a few names of tube stations on the walls and let me go the whole hog."

"I am voicing the opinion of the majority of my colleagues," writes Mechanic 07211, "when I ask the management to allow us to return to the original timetable. We are aware that the decision to introduce five breaks of five minutes each instead of one break of twenty minutes was made from generous and scientific motives, but we doubt whether the effect on cigarette consumption has been considered. With prices as they are we feel that one break a day is as much as we can afford unless the management is prepared to make an allowance for additional tobacco consumed."



"Sorry, Sir—sold clean out."



"... and just think—if we adopt Mr. Stote as our prospective candidate, we can use 'Vote for Stote' as a slogan."

Busy Day in the Life of an Air Correspondent

DARTING down Whitehall, I bumped into the Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal. Before I could pick myself up he had passed on with a ruthless chortle.

Air Ministry are disinclined to regard as a fit subject for humour
A widely circulated rumour
That the desks of high dignitaries of the Secretariat
positively bristle
With printed slips bearing the legends, "Passed to you, Claud," and "No, passed to you, Cecil."

"What do you think," I whispered to Lord Trenchard, "of the notion that the R.A.F. should have its own Navy and Army?"
"I've heard one or two recent suggestions," boomed his lordship, "equally barmy."

Though gambling is forbidden in all places under Air Force control, there is little chance that this regulation will be applied to pilots wishing to take part in sweeps over France.

"Can you suggest," I asked their Air Commandant, "a really snappy motto for the WAAF?"
"'Mind Your Own Business,'" she replied promptly, with a crisp little laugh.

It is believed that the aggregate of bombs dropped over Germany during the last thirty days Exceeded the deadweight of Air Ministry files reposing in Finance Branch "Pending" trays.

Emerging abruptly and in some confusion From an attempt to interview the Minister for Aircraft Production, I reached the conclusion That he is interested in nowt but Output.

C. L. M.



ADOLF IN THE LOOKING-GLASS

"Bowler-hatted! And to think that this time two years ago I was being measured for the British crown!"

[It was rumoured last week that his generals had asked Hitler to resign his post as Commander-in-Chief, but that he declined to entertain the idea.]

News from Iceland

MY DEAR MOTHER,—As you see, I have arrived safely. I should like to repeat that in capitals. I HAVE ARRIVED SAFELY. I AM NOW WALKING ABOUT ON DRY LAND. THERE ARE NO HOSTILE UNITS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY. In short, I am no longer at sea.

Do not be alarmed. I was not in fact torpedoed, mined, bombed or machine-gunned. I saw nothing openly hostile except quantities of the rather vicious-looking North Atlantic. The ship was well found, proceeded in a normal manner, and, so far as I could judge, started and arrived completely in accordance with schedule. Looking back on it, you may think that I am making a fuss about nothing. But the crux or nub of the situation is that I completed my return voyage from leave with one of those people who like to describe how one is torpedoed, mined, bombed and/or machine-gunned.

But let me start at the beginning.

After I left you I proceeded to Port "A" and then I boarded the vessel s.s. "B," a craft of some "C" tons, and we sailed for Port "D" in Iceland. And on board we had troops to the number of "E" and one R.N.R. officer whom I will call Smith (because it is slightly less unreal than calling him "F," which was not his name either).

The captain was Scotch and a little taciturn. For example, I asked him if the troops on board could help with manning his A.A. defences, and he replied, kindly but shortly, that he had some permanent gunners on board. "But," he added, apparently as an afterthought, "ye can tak them over if there is no one else left." I must say I felt that to be the wrong note on which to start a longish sea-voyage.

But compared with Smith he was gaiety itself. Smith was obviously a man of most helpful disposition and a prodigious memory. He had sailed in merchant ships for the best part of thirty years, and to him the last war

happened but yesterday. "I remember," he said, looking reflectively round such portions of the port of A as are visible from the docks, "I was here in 1917. We had been torpedoed some ten miles out. You've no idea how the tide runs. We were the only boat to get away, and in the darkness we were carried against the pier-head. A pity so few in the boat could swim. Do you swim much yourself?"

It had been a nice fine day till then.

"Yes," he went on, as we walked downstairs for the drink I had then suggested, "it's odd how difficult it is to get along an alleyway when the ship is down by the bow or stern. Particularly as the electric-light usually goes early on. I remember on the old *Drambuie* when she was torpedoed off the Irish coast—must have been in '16. I had to wait for the sea to float me out. It was a good thing I was on 'A' deck."

That's the kind of thing that sets you against an otherwise perfectly good cabin, which happens to be considerably lower than "A" deck.

Naturally he got more interesting after we had sailed. There was a certain amount of coast visible for a certain amount of time (I don't think the Censor can object to that kind of statement), and Smith seemed to know every inch of it. "Yes," he said meditatively, brooding on an apparently innocent cove, "the U-boats were very fond of that spot in the last war. We never discovered it until the war was over. Some chance conversation in a Berlin hotel, so I've heard. Of course they're bound to have a few hide-outs like that just around here. It's such a good centre."

Nor did our air defences fill him with any real degree of confidence. We were watching some unit of the Fleet Air Arm on its job and he shook his head sadly. "You can never be sure," he said. "Why, only last month my ship was in an Atlantic convoy and a plane came in, just like this one is doing, and with our own markings too. The pilot waved and they waved back, and then it made another run and dropped one right down the funnel. They only saved six men and the ship's cat. It was a black one, like the one on this ship."

But his first big moment came a day or so later when one of our escorts started dropping depth-charges about half a mile away. I thought some careless engineer had let a spanner slip into the works downstairs, but no!



"You should see what they've got at the shop in the High Street."



"Dammit! 'The Saxon Chronicle' gets smaller every week!"

Smith smiled wisely and started to blow up his patent life-saving waist-coat.

"Pity you haven't one of these," he said. "Much better than the standard type, I think. These U-boats," he went on meditatively, "usually hunt in pairs at least. Sometimes up to half a dozen. I remember once in the Mediterranean in the last war. June it was, too. I was nearly thirty-six hours in the water. Of course you couldn't stand anything like that time in the Atlantic. About half an hour, I should think."

He looked round the horizon.

"The light's about right," he went on, and lit a cigarette. "It isn't worth while lighting a pipe now."

Next morning very early I was out on deck. It had been a poor night, one in which sleep had played little part. The captain had advised us to keep our clothes on—unnecessary advice, in point of fact, for I had never had the slightest intention of taking them off. My view had been that the nearer I was to a raft the happier I would be. I felt I was involved in an unusual and unpleasant game of musical chairs,

and if I were caught too far away from a raft—

Smith was there, leaning against a bulwark, or stanchion, or something. "Mistake to come out too early," he said. "They usually put on their machine-gun attacks out of the early-morning sun. A chap I knew very well was killed that way. Of course you may be lucky and get to cover."

Just then there was a hail from the bridge, and looking ahead, I saw a small raft a few hundred yards away. There were four men on it. By some miracle they had drifted on to our course.

Smith frowned. "Now we are for it," he said. "A sub has probably stalked that raft since dawn, and as soon as we heave-to we're a sitting target. Don't stand too near the rail. A friend of mine got his like that. The torpedo hit just below where he was standing. Oddly enough, he was the only casualty."

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

The engine-room bells rang, we manoeuvred and adroitly brought the raft under our starboard bow. The men on it were able to catch the rope, but they were too stiff to move and, in trying to make it fast, one overbalanced and fell into the sea. Quick as an arrow, Smith dropped his life-jacket and dived over the side. He got him on board all right.

I congratulated him afterwards as he was gradually getting warm again by drinking quantities of hot soup. "Damn fool thing to have done!" he said moodily. "A cousin of mine did the same thing and got crushed against the side of the ship. Went down like a stone. Nice chap, he was. About your age."

I have come to the conclusion that if I want any more sea-voyages just now I shall wait until I transfer to the Navy—and I am not going to transfer to the Navy.

Your loving Son, HAROLD.

○ ○

"Mais n'om d'une pipe, cet Arthur . . ."
Daily Paper.

N'on, n'on!

At the Play

"THE WATCH ON THE RHINE" (ALDWYCH)

IT is an odd but fairly constant fact that tragedy can thrive in tragic circumstance. It might be thought that those who have themselves suffered the extremity of fear and pain would regard the mimicry of these emotions as superfluous. "Life is there; why copy it?" That familiar argument against realism in the arts may seem all the more cogent when life is being endured at its worst.

Yet such is this mystery called art and such is the complexity of human nature that the sad play may be most esteemed and appreciated in sad times. Those, for example, who have had the blitz at their shattered doors have flocked to a play about bombed London, such as *The Morning Star*, despite all the previous pronouncements of the wise ones that this sort of thing would never draw. And so with *The Watch on the Rhine*, a play which shows, in the still peaceful surroundings of far-off America, the unbreakable resolution of an anti-Nazi German. This quiet hero, having escaped from hell, will go back to hell's brink in order to renew the struggle that he deems to be the essential duty of himself and indeed of us all.

It is not death only that he has faced and will face again. His enemies are not so gentle as that. It is torture. It is, in effect, torture also for his wife and children that, having reached America, he should insist on leaving it once more. He has given hostages to fortune, and the serene, secure American home of his mother-in-law is invaded by a whole family who have been living in the vagrancy and misery of exile. Miss LILLIAN HELLMAN's play is centred in this home to which come these survivors of the European storm and in which the man discovers that even here the evil that he fights can penetrate. The nigger in this wood-pile may be all benignity, a pantry "treasure," but the white man from the Balkans turns out

to be neither white nor a man, but far more closely resembling a snake in the grass.

The play rises, rather slowly at times, to a climax of strength and

and excitement to the inner conflict of the hero's struggle between domestic and political ties. The end, notably assisted by the integrity of Mr. ANTON WALBROOK's beautiful performance, has a terrible and tranquil power.

When I saw the piece the text was occasionally being wasted owing to the general refusal to be suspect of melodrama. But I expect that voices will have been lifted by now and that the acting will have gained in emphasis without losing in subtlety. The accomplished casting which triumphantly puts Miss ATHENE SEYLER into the grey of an old lady of character, Miss BETTY HARDY into the black of a no less characterful companion, and Mr. CHARLES GOLDNER into the skin of the serpent, makes a generally persuasive job of it. Domesticity is represented by Miss DIANA WYNYARD in a far from showy rôle that is most scrupulously played; and the accent on youth is acutely placed there by Master IVAN DELEY, whose very human boyhood brings welcome relief to a story of man's inhumanity to man, a story of rare quality in writing and presentation.

I. B.

"AWAKE AND SING" (ARTS THEATRE CLUB)

WHERE, oh, where, would our dramatists be if young people were happy in the family? Youth, "living dully sluggardized at home," as SHAKESPEARE's *Valentine* observed in defence of early travel, would provide

neither the modern Second Act, in which indignant adolescence defies papa and bangs the piano, nor the Elizabethan Fifth Act, in which the same article knocks grey iniquity all of a heap on a heavily blood-boltered stage. Youth nowadays need not, to suit the dramatist, go so far as parricide. But ever since Mr. COWARD set the juvenile fashion for rushing to the piano when caught in a vortex, it has tended to find musical relief. It need not arise and slay; but it must certainly awake and sing.

Mr. CLIFFORD ODETS' young *Mr. Berger*, of the Bronx, N.Y., U.S.A., is the incipient rebel of a very Jewish home, whose materfamilias (poor father counts no more than a fly on the ceiling) would



WORDS, NOT DEEDS

Fanny Farrelly . . . MISS ATHENE SEYLER

quiet pathos. The snake that was to be scotched is, not undeservedly, killed, and this adds vigorous physical action



PRESSED FOR TIME

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Sara Müller | MISS DIANA WYNYARD |
| Kurt Müller | MR. ANTON WALBROOK |
| Teck de Brancovis | MR. CHARLES GOLDNER |

manage the affairs and destinies of all who come within her considerable reach. He is encouraged to lift up his voice in freedom's chant by a frail and charming old grandfather who feels that his own failure ever to be a chorister in Liberty Hall is all the more reason for the boy to be his own music-master. "Alas for those who never sing, But die with all their music in them." The pathos of the old man who has read much and done nothing and now suffers perpetual insult from his vulgar bullying daughter-in-law is beautifully communicated by Mr. MARTIN MILLER, while Miss LILLY KANN makes the portrait of that odious and self-righteous woman a masterpiece in acting as in writing.

Awake and Sing is very much a play of its time and place (the American nineteen-thirties) and is rich in rough wise-crackery and the retort dis-courteous. It will be followed, at the newly reopened Arts Theatre Club, by *Twelfth Night*, and if the group of actors engaged in this venture can woo as sweetly in Illyria as they now battle raucously in the Bronx it should be a notable journey to *Olivia's* household. Meanwhile, *Mrs. Berger's* drab demesne, with the rich Uncle Morty guffawing over roast duck while others suffer, quarrel, and turn to the rival consolations of Communism, CARUSO (old records) and dreams of aviation or amour, is a very poignant home of drama and often an amusing one too. Incidentally, HITLER seems temporarily to have solved some of these old play-problems; young Mr. Berger, for example, is now receiving, no doubt, all the aeroplane practice for which he pined while mother scolded. I. B.

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At the Ballet

"HAMLET" (NEW)

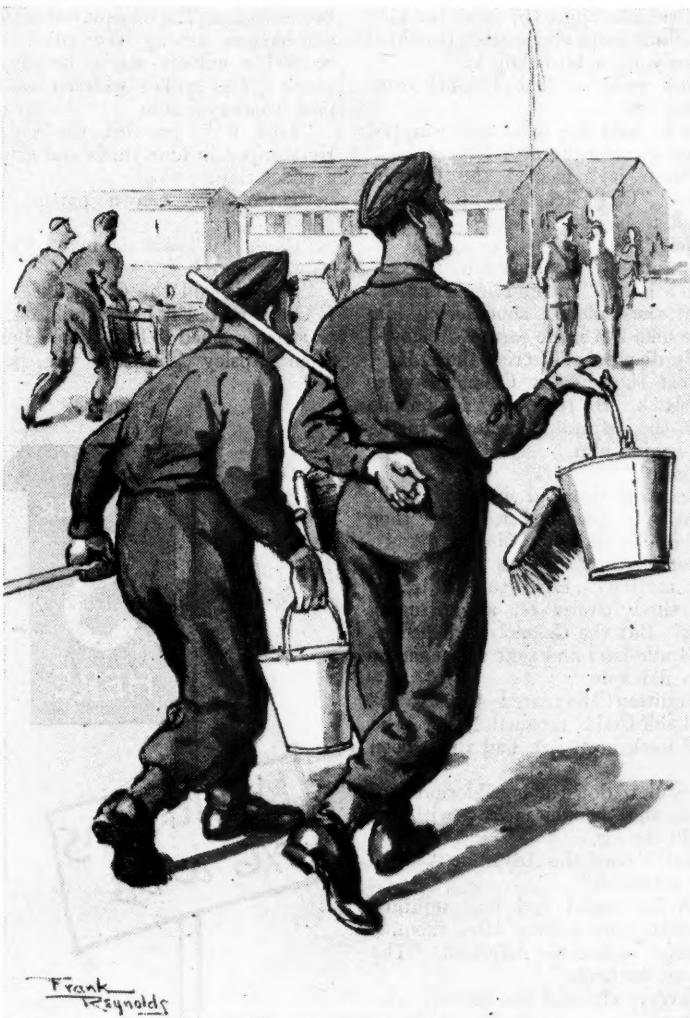
"To die, to sleep;
To sleep, perchance to dream: ay,
there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams
may come . . .
Must give us pause."

THIS is the theme chosen by the Sadlers Wells Company for their extremely effective ballet version of *Hamlet*, in which Mr. ROBERT HELPMANN, the choreographer, takes the name part. We have long known of Mr. HELPMANN's versatility and ability to portray the tragic, the sinister and the macabre, and this subject gives him the fullest scope. (One would like

to see him in the play.) As the curtain rises the dead *Hamlet* is being borne away into the darkness on the shoulders of pall-bearers. The Ghost appears, and a Grave-digger drinking ghoulish toasts from the skull of "poor Yorick," and gradually the tragedy, distorted and dream-like, is enacted around the tortured dreamer. The atmosphere of blood and horror is admirably sustained by the gory-looking décor with its clutching hands and dripping daggers, the scarlet-robed chorus and Mr. HELPMANN's agonized portrayal of *Hamlet*. Miss MARGOT FONTEYN is frailly and pathetically out of her wits as *Ophelia*, garlanded and dressed in pale-green satin reminiscent of her sad end down among the duck-weed. The

ballet ends as it begins with the corpse of *Hamlet* and the pall-bearers, after all the characters have duly come to a mad or bad end. The music is by TSCHAIKOWSKY, and Mr. LESLIE HURRY is greatly to be congratulated on his décor and costumes.

A number of favourite ballets are being revived by the Company this season, among them the ever-popular *Sylphides*. One would like to make a plea for the romantic and Chopinesque floral coronets, which have long been banished by Sadlers Wells. The airy, wraith-like appearance of the dancers in their TAGLIANI dresses is spoiled too by harsh white lighting, which tempts one to say with *Hamlet* "O that this too, too solid flesh would melt . . ."



STYLE

Military Career

SO secret the papers, the Colonel and the Adjutant burned them themselves in the area dust-bin.

"That's that," said the Colonel, shoving in the last "Most Secret."

"You're black as a minstrel, Apsley."

"Not quite." The Adjutant austerely qualified both points. For the wind, picking a Plan of Fortifications out of the bin, tossed it five stories before they could say Security. It passed out of sight, going well.

"Lose that and I'm bowler-hatted!" cried the Colonel.

They raced into the street and down it and into the next as the plan swept the roof-tops. They crossed a bridge and a park. They threaded a street-market, a cinema-queue, a bus-depot, a protest meeting. On went the plan in mocking loops and swirls. It lighted suddenly by a bird-shop.

"Got you!" The Colonel came panting up.

Swish! said the wind and whipped it over a corset-factory.

"Damn it!" gasped the Colonel, baffled. "Can't keep this up. You're red as a beetroot, Apsley. Ah—a solution!"

He brought a dispatch-rider screeching to a halt. "In the King's name!" roared the Colonel, shouldering him off his bike. "On the carrier, Apsley!"

"My dispatches!" cried the D.R.

"Post them!" the Colonel's voice came back. He took a corner on one wheel, the Adjutant streaming in the wind behind him.

"There!"

The plan dropped into a public square and described a loop: then another. So did the Colonel.

"For God's sake cease this vertiginous motion!" cried the Adjutant, after three circles on a shortening radius. But the Colonel wrenched at the handle-bars and sent the machine into a flat spin.

"Perdition!" he roared—"off again."

"Thank God!" moaned Apsley, who would have been sick had there been time.

They flew down a bewilderment of streets, the Colonel mostly with his head in the air.

"Gad!" cried the Adjutant, "we're being followed."

A flying squad and four military policemen were tearing after them.

"Stop!" called the Adjutant. "The law's on our heels."

"Never!" shouted the Colonel, who saw bowler-hats, could feel them on his brow. "Death or dishonour!" He opened up.

"I will pray to the God of all adjutants," faltered Apsley.

The Colonel took a corner on trust.

They came out on a by-pass. The paper seemed to feel its freedom. The motor-bike touched seventy.

"Where are we going?"

"According to plan," cried the Colonel. Apsley, shuddering, detected a wildness in his tone. After them thundered motorized justice. The paper did a hair-pin bend and turned back. The Colonel spun round in the road and traversed his pursuers without noticing them. Their vehicles piled up on the pavements.

"Oh, dear!" Apsley covered his face with his hands.

Now the plan led them through a bombed area. The bike played oranges-and-lemons among the ruins, then crossed a culvert on a bricklayer's plank. The spokes whizzed an inch past a navvy's nose.

"Lost it!" growled the Colonel. He stopped in four yards and gripped a pedestrian.

"Have you seen a paper flying past?"

"Can't say," said the man. "I'm a stranger here."

"Sorry," said the Colonel.

They sighted it half a mile on, but no street seemed to lead there. Behind them Apsley glimpsed the police,

much recruited. The Colonel brought off another halt.

"Hey!" he shouted to a man with a bottle. "How do I get that way?"

"I'm a respectable citizen," replied the man frigidly. "My identity card is in order. I am proceeding to Peckham Rye."

"But we aren't," bawled the Colonel.

"Who knows?" quavered Apsley, with a hopeless glance at the vanishing script.

The chase continued. The driver shortened a detour by going through an amusement gallery.

In a boulevard just beyond it, the plan dived towards a carpenter. The bike bore down on him.

"Hold it!" shrieked the Colonel.

"Hold what?" cried the carpenter, paralysed.

"That, dammit! dammit, that!"

It shook the steady fellow to see a high Army officer enjoin him to catch at nothing. The paper slipped through his ineffectual hands and took off again. The Colonel raced by. A moment after a whole panzer division of police missed the carpenter by inches as he took his dazed way across the road. He went home and turned religious.

Meanwhile, plan and bike ran neck and neck, the Colonel making unsuccessful grabs at it.

"Please," pleaded Apsley—"please keep one hand on the handle-bars."

Dazedly he realized they were back at the billet.

The plan banked steeply. The Colonel's fingers snapped on empty air. The paper rose five stories and went over the building. The Colonel ran into a sand-pit. They left the bike together and the impetus carried them most of the way to the area.

They were in time to see their plan flutter down, fall into the dust-bin and burn itself away.

"Hey? What do you fellows want?" barked the Colonel.

Thirty assorted policemen were ranked at the door.

"You've got your paper, sir?" said a sergeant. "That's all we want to know. Good day."

"Good day," said the Colonel, affably. "What's the matter, Apsley? You're white as a sheet!"

o o

"St. Helens Town Council yesterday decided to advertise for a new electrical engineer at a salary of £1,250 per annum, instead of at a salary of £1,250."

Liverpool Paper.

Must have been a stormy debate.





"Yes, I can come and 'elp with the garden reg'lar every Friday, but there's one thing, Mum, if the invasion should come on a Friday I shouldn't be able to come that day as I'm in the 'Ome Guard."

Castle Sanguine

I SEE the castle held again
And, mustering in the gloom,
Round helmets shining through the
rain
Upon the Hill of Doom.
I hear the ring of marching feet
Come heralding the van
And drums, in grim crescendo, beat
Below the barbican.
*Turn out your guard, old hill of shades—
For Time brings back the naked blades!*

Stark engines shake the cobbled track
Before the outer ward,
But how the echoes welcome back
The sound of strength restored!

Scarred wraiths behold, with pride of power
And dim remembering eyes,
Below the battlemented tower,
The keen portcullis rise.
*And blood runs hot where steel is sharp
Along the mantled counterscarp.*

And mists like fluttered kerchiefs float
From bowers where blackthorn springs,
While rain that rises in the moat
Recalls a thousand things.
I see the castle held again,
New-risen from long sleep.
Old joyance at a new campaign
Blows fiercely through the keep.
*Turn out your guard of ghosts, old dream!
Command includes you in the Scheme....*

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Cagliostro

CAGLIOSTRO is now only remembered for his connection with the Affair of the Diamond Necklace, the most sensational of the scandals which discredited MARIE ANTOINETTE and helped to precipitate the French Revolution. But he was one of the great impostors of an age almost as prolific in charlatans as our own, and is well worth the labour which has gone to this skilful and entertaining reconstruction of his life (*Count Cagliostro*, by MICHAEL HARRISON, RICH AND COWAN, 18/-).

His name to begin with was GIUSEPPE BALSAMO, and his father, a tradesman of Palermo, designed him for the church, where his career was brief. Expelled from his monastery for ribald conduct, he tried his prentice hand at forgery, conducting both sides of a correspondence between his sister and a boy cousin, who, warmed by the loving letters he received above the girl's signature, sent her presents through BALSAMO. Encouraged by this small success, BALSAMO, intuitively realizing that business men are the easiest victims of the confidence trickster, induced a Palermo banker to part with a considerable sum in return for being led to a grotto which, BALSAMO assured him on the authority of certain psychic powers he possessed, contained buried treasure. On reaching the grotto the banker was beaten into unconsciousness by four goatherds, whom BALSAMO had hired for the purpose and rigged out as demons. Cupidity, as Mr. HARRISON points out, was by no means BALSAMO's ruling passion. Power was even dearer to him, and his desire for it was no doubt fully satisfied in his impecunious teens by the spectacle of a local banker stretched insensible at his feet. Hurriedly leaving Palermo, BALSAMO vanished in an easterly direction, reappearing in Italy some years later with a good deal of occult lore, which he had picked up in Arabia, Egypt and Turkey. That he had genuine powers as a clairvoyant, hypnotist and faith-healer is well established. Unfortunately, like many persons with such powers, he misused them.

Having arrived in Rome as Count ALESSANDRO DI CAGLIOSTRO, he married a girl of fifteen, to whom he seems to have been as devoted as was consistent with placing her, with her willing and intelligent assistance, in compromising situations out of which the third parties involved could extricate themselves only by money payments to the outraged Count. Tiring of Rome, or Rome tiring of them, the Count and his wife set off for Germany, meeting CASANOVA on the way, and a far more remarkable adventurer on their arrival, the Count DE ST. GERMAIN, who, whether, as some believed, the son of a salamander, or, as seems more probable, the son of a Portuguese Jew, imposed himself on the Court of LOUIS XV in the character of a magician who had learnt the secret of immortality and was already two thousand years of age. It may have been from the Count DE ST. GERMAIN that CAGLIOSTRO was initiated into freemasonry, to which he turned to rehabilitate his fortunes after some trying experiences in London, where, though himself a self-made aristocrat, he had reposed altogether too blind a confidence in a Lord and Lady SCOT. Travelling across Germany, he was cordially received by the freemasons of Leipzig. A prophecy of his that the Master of the Leipzig Lodge would die within a month having been fulfilled, one hopes without any assistance from CAGLIOSTRO, the freemasons of Leipzig listened eagerly to his exposition of the principles of Egyptian masonry, which, he said, was

founded by the Patriarchs. Having constituted himself Grand Master of Egyptian Masonry, with the title of Grand Cophta, the first holder of which, according to CAGLIOSTRO, had been ENOCH, CAGLIOSTRO found himself in a position to make the most both of his real and his assumed powers. The times suited him well. It was an uneasy age, in ferment with the revolution, contemptuous of old beliefs and ready to swallow any new absurdity. In this atmosphere CAGLIOSTRO attained a European reputation, which reached its climax in Strasbourg. When he drove into Strasbourg in a magnificent carriage, clad in a blue coat covered with gold bullion and precious stones, and wearing his long hair caught up in a net of gold thread, the populace welcomed him like a king. During his stay there he placed his remarkable powers as a healer at the service of the poor, while his wife sold bottles of the Count's elixir of life to the rich. The bottles sold briskly, for though she was only twenty-five the Countess used to refer casually to her son in the Dutch Army—he was twenty-eight and a captain, she would reply when questioned by her astonished friends. The idol of everyone in Strasbourg, noble and poor alike, the medical profession alone excepted, CAGLIOSTRO left for Paris as the friend and confidant of one of the most powerful men in France, the Archbishop of Strasbourg, Cardinal ROHAN.

Although CAGLIOSTRO had no hand in the complicated swindle known as the Affair of the Diamond Necklace, he was ruined by it. Mr. HARRISON says that it is against all the rules of improving literature that CAGLIOSTRO should have owed his downfall not to his own follies but to the perjury of a complete stranger. It may be admitted that if CAGLIOSTRO had lived like PASCAL or FRANCIS of Assisi, his entanglement in the Affair of the Diamond Necklace would take some explaining from the moral or any other standpoint. His life being what it was, it seems natural enough.

H. K.

Three Little Maids from School

An intimate biography written mainly in dug-outs during the bombardment of Chungking, *The Soong Sisters* (HALE, 15/-) may be pardoned a certain disjointedness of matter and form. A greater obstacle to the enjoyment of Miss EMILY HAHN's account of her famous friends is a certain sentimental lavishness of not very revealing detail coupled with a definite reluctance to delineate that detail's important background for the benefit of the uninitiated. ELING, CHINGLING and MAYLING SOONG, daughters of a Chinese tradesman converted to Methodism in Boston and Communism in Shanghai, became respectively Madame KUNG, Madame SUN YAT-SEN and Madame CHIANG KAI-SHEK—the two latter, to the grief of their devout evangelical mother, supplanting a brace of existing wives. The public career of Madame CHIANG KAI-SHEK has been so well documented that the chronicler was undoubtedly right in allowing CHARLIE SOONG's youth and his daughters' school and college days to dominate half her book. The latter are illuminated by MAYLING's personal reminiscences and by a theme of the youthful CHINGLING's on the overthrow of the Manchu government. All three ladies strike one as owing a great deal more than the delightful Southern accent with which they speak American to those formative years in Georgia.

H. P. E.

Tragedy to Music

Venice, the Council of Ten, Naples, the opera at San Carlo, a Palladian mansion in England, memories of Farinelli, and the perpetuation of his kind—nothing

could be more effective for a rather bitter little story of the eighteenth century. In *Musk and Amber* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) Mr. A. E. W. MASON makes no mistakes: he is writing under a charm. The book is nearly perfect of its kind, from the opening with the boy heard singing somewhere out of sight in the heart of an English country-house to the return of the same boy, at the age of nineteen, to exact vengeance from a cruel sister and an usurping master. For an historical romance it shows great daring and is all the better for it. This is not a ladylike affair of fans and bows and elopements and courts and candles guttering: it is the history of a crime. Behind the figure of the reluctant observer, the worldly, epicurean, dilettante Sir James, whose passion is music and especially opera music, strange forms cross the stage, strange wickedness is done upon it. For the boy-master of that great mansion is put out of the way on an Italian journey, and in his place there appears a new *castrato*, presently to be the most celebrated in Europe. Mr. MASON handles his material well. Without sentimentality, he never lets the reader forget the painful, indeed the tragic element in his drama, and however energetic the action there is no falling off in a remarkably shrewd, delicate and economical statement of character. This is the sort of thing that makes one believe in a serious future for the historical piece. J. S.

Persons, Plays and Places

The most delightful quality of Mr. ALAN DENT's criticism is the accomplished readiness of its sympathy. His *Preludes and Studies* (MACMILLAN, 12/6) reflect, as HAZLITT said such conclusions should, "the colours, the shades, the soul and body" of the matter with which they deal. The critic, as Sir MAX BEERBOHM points out in a charming letter of introduction, is never a detractor, reluctantly a disparager, and gladly "an enlightened judge of excellence." He uses the works of critical predecessors not to save himself trouble but to heighten his readers' enjoyment and render a becoming tribute from youth to age. And the things he judges range from the submerged genius and talent of PAGANINI and Mrs. HENRY WOOD to such perdurable reputations as those of BOSWELL and BURNS. Plays performed are in the nature of things more difficult to refurbish for those who missed the lustre of the original performances; but the same canons are illustrated by the career of RACHEL and the GIELGUD productions of Shakespeare, and the enlightenment persists. Beyond



*Petty Officer of Patrol. "HULLO, YOU. WHAT'S YOUR SHIP?"
Sailor (returning from revelry). "OW LONG 'AVE YOU BEEN BLIND? IT'S
WROTE PLAIN ENOUGH ON MY CAP, AIN'T IT?"*

Charles Grave, June 3rd, 1914

"People" and "Plays" there are "Places" ("A Century of Kew" and "On Foot to Casterbridge"), the whole book affording the happiest possible proof of the mutual enrichment of art and life.

H. P. E.

Smith Minor, Detective

(By Smith Minor)

ONE memorial day, at the knick of eiht, Morley Major disapeared!!

(Note.—I have begun like that becouse I have been told by a detective writer, at least he said he was and he looked like one, that every story ouht to start with something starteling.

"Why?" I said. "Becorse if it dosen't," he said, "poeple won't read on." "Oh," I said. Mind you, that didn't mean I agreead with him, you often say "Oh," jest to end up, but seeing what he meant I thort I'd try it, and as you'll see I have, so now I hope you will read on. End of note.)

The eiht was p.m., not a.m., and acktually he disapeared before then, but it was not till eiht that I found out by hearing two other boys talking about it, they saying,

"Have you seen Morley Major?" said the first.

"Why shuold I of?" said the second.

"I didn't say you shuold of, I asked if you had of," said the first. "No one's seen him for four hours."

"What, missed two meals!" said the second.

"Yes, and poeple are getting anxious," said the first, "so have you?"

"Have I what?" said the second.

"Seen him," said the first.

"If no one has, how cuold I of?" said the second. "Perhaps he's been kidknapped, thou who'd want him?"

Now that was jest what I was begining to think myself, I don't mean who'd want him, thou who wuold, but if he'd been kidknapped, becouse:

(1) I'd seen him at 3.47 walking along a muddy road with a red-haired man folowing him.

(2) He was going in for the Pilkington Meddle next day.*

(3) So was another boy who had red hair.

(4) Suppose this boy's father, he also having red hair, like he wuold, suppose he was afraid that Morley wuold win the meddle instead of his own scion, well, what then?

Anyhow it seamed to me that I ouht to talk to Green about it, so instead of going to bed wih I'd been going to throuh fealing rather wobberley after eating a rather cewrious sweet, I went to Green and I said,

"Do you know that Morley Major's disapeared?"

"Yes," he said.

"Who told you?" I said.

"You did," he said.

"Please don't begin going on like that," I said, "this is serious. I saw him at 3.47 being folowed by a man with red hair and I think he was being kidknapped."

"You only kidknap girls or rich poeple," he said, "not boys with spots."

"What about if you think the boy with spots is going to beat your son tomorrow and win a meddle unless you do away with him?" I said.

Then *une grande change* came over him, and he said,

"By Gum! Morley and Hornblower have both been swotting for the Pilkington Meddle, and Hornblower's got red hair!"

"Yes, and where did he get it from?" I said, now seeing he was twigging. "You don't start red hair, you go on with it."

"From his father, you'd think," he said.

"That's what I think," I said, "and if I'm right and Hornblower's father has kidknapped Morley, it dosen't matter if we like Morley or not, we're English, and we've got to do something about it."

"We have," he agreead, "only what? We can't go to the Head, becouse if you're *not* right that'll be slander."

"I agreea," I agreead, also agreeing, "wich means we've got to go after him ourselves. Cuold you go up and get one of his boots?"

"What for," he said, "and why not you?"

"What for you'll know later," I said, "and why not me, becouse (1) I've got to get a map wih you wuoldn't know where it was, (2) by each doing one thing we'll save time, (3) we've jolly well got to save time or we may be too late, he may be defunkte already, and (4) I happen to be fealing a little wobberley and Morley's room is three flights up."

"I hope you're not fealing wobberley throuh eating that sweet," he said.

"As a matter of fact it proberly is," I said, "but why do you hope not?"

"Becorse I had one, too," he said. "Morley gave it to me."

And then, in one of those sudden flashes of injudion, the whole fell plan

came over me. Morley had given us the sweets, but, ah! who had given them to Morley? I wuold leave the gentel reader to guess, but in case he or she isn't quite up to it, I'll let him or her know. Hornblower's father!

Well, you can bet we didn't waist any more prescious time. In a cupple of twinks we had got the boot and the map, and in a cupple more we were on the road where I'd seen the missing twain* at 3.47. And, lo! there were their footprints!

Acktually there were about twenty other sets as well, but two of the sets fitted Morley's boot (the reader will now see why I neaded it), and so we knew that one of the two sets was his.

Well, it was a long road, wih I won't weerry the reader with like it weered us, but will come to where it falked, there being a sygn-post a *cette point ceci*, saying (a) To Helchester, and (b) To the Beach. I got out my map.

"What's that for?" said Green.

"To make sure it's right," I said, "sometimes they alter them."

"How do we want to know wih one we want to go to?" he said.

"We'll know by the footprints," I said.

"Then why do we want the map?" he said.

"I see what you mean," I said.

So we put away the map and got out the boot, and then arose one of those diferculties

"Wich make you feal that you are caught,
And lessor hearts than ours wuold thwaught,"

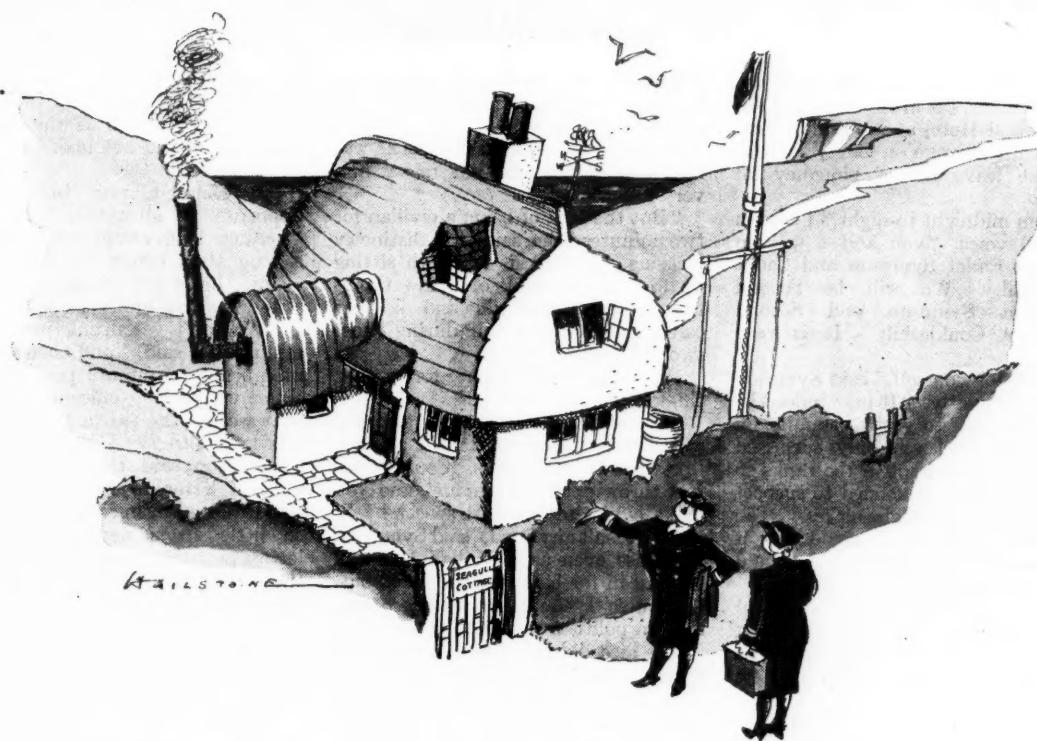
(not meaning to boast, wih both Green and I bar), we now finding that the two sets of prints that fitted Morley's boot went diferten ways. This meant that we'd have to go diferten ways, too, wih made us a bit glumm.

"Bags I the beach," said Green, but we tossed and I won. But when I said, "Bags I the boot," we tossed again and he won.

Well, we said good-bye, thinking that one of us might never see the other again and wondering wih one if any it wuold be, and now I come to the climbaz for wih the gentel reader has so paciently waited. And he or she will find that, his or her hat, it *was* a climbaz!

* Morley Major and Mr. Hornblower.
Auther.

* A meddle given by one Pilkington.
Auther.



"She's aboard all right. Her galley funnel's smoking."

I had walked scarce 6½ minutes when, lo! I came to the beach, and lo! again, I also came to the man with the red hair! The sun was setting on him, or perhaps one shouold say the sunlight, making him look even redder than ever, and he was standing outside a fell-looking fisherman's hut staring towards the north-east-by-east, where there was a boat. Then suddenly his head shot round, as quick as if he'd pressed a trigure, and he stared south-west-by-south, wich being where I was, I shot down quicker than his head had shot round. The reason I cuold do it was becorse we have Bombe Practise at school, and if you don't go down plonk you're suposed to be dead.

Luckerly he didn't spot me, but by squinting in a speshul way I've worked out wich wuold take too long to explane, espeshully as I've nearly come to the end of the words the Editer allows me, I spotted *him*, and saw him turn and go back into the fell hut.

Don't think I'm brave, if I was I'd tell you, but I don't happen to be, and my heart was beating on the beach like a pistion, but if you were at school you'd know that you can't let anyone

else in the same school down, others don't matter so much, and so what I did was to craul forward, still keaping on my stummock in case he came out again, till I got to the hut, and when I got to the hut he did come out again, and *in his arms was Morley* !

Of cors, then the whole plot was as plane as a pikestaugh! He was going to kidnap Morley in the boat to the Continent! Perhaps, who knew, to be sold as horsemeat!

Now, when the man is bigger than you are, you swoop down and go for his legs, but I was already down, so all I had to do was to go for his legs, wich I did. This meant, of cors, that they all came down, too, and rather unforchunately I was at the bottom, and honestly I felt like a paper bag must feal jest after you've birst it. I don't remember much for a bit, becorse

"The world was naught but legs and feet

Wich wizzed in anger and in heat," and even afterwards the world went on wizzing, and I can only tell you what I think they said, not what I'm sure, this being, i.e.:

Morley: "What's hapening?"

The Man: "Don't ask me! When I came upon you before tea you looked groggy, but you said you were O.K. Then when I heard later you'd disapeared, I remembered where I'd seen you, and tracked you to this hut. That's where I found you, unconshus."

Morley: "Did you? I don't remeber anything. I've been over-swotting a bit for the Pilkington Meddle, and then some sweets I ate didn't go to the spot and my mind seamed to sort of slip, but I don't remember anything."

The Man: "Well, I reckon this shake-up has broght your memery back! Yes, and who the purpel blazes are *you*?"

Me: "Smith Minor. Who are you?"

The Man: "Me? My name's Pilkington."

If there was any more I didn't hear it, becorse, well, I swoooned. I swooon a bit easily.

Mind you, one was glad Morley hadn't been kidnapped, and if I didn't do much, I did help to bring his memery back. But the worst luck was on Green. He went all the way to Helchester, and it's eiht miles.

Two Minutes

SYMPSON and I, disguised as civilians, sat in the lounge of the Grand Hotel at Munton-on-Sea. Once again we were on leave, but this time the leave had a piquancy all its own.

"From midnight to-night," I said in an awed voice, "you and I will no longer be Cadet Sympson and Cadet Conkleshill. We will be Second Lieutenant Sympson and Second Lieutenant Conkleshill. It is very strange."

"Speak for yourself," said Sympson rather indignantly. "It may indeed be strange for you to get a commission, but personally I am only surprised that I have been kept in the ranks so long. I am almost inclined to suspect jiggery-pokery in high places. The War Office people were afraid that if they gave me a commission I should shake them up a bit."

I knew perfectly well that the real reason Sympson had been so long getting his commission was that he could not slope arms, but I had no wish to upset him.

"Actually," I said, "I believe that we are discharged from the Army at 2359 hours, and that our commissions date from a minute past midnight. It seems a curious arrangement. If we were killed during those two minutes

I suppose we would be counted as civilians, and our widows would not get Army pensions."

Sympson pointed out that as he was not married this did not worry him very much.

"But the idea of being a civilian for two minutes," he said, "is distinctly pleasing. I think it is worth sitting up for. Let's think of a few things that civilians can do and soldiers can't, and do them all during those two minutes."

We were both silent for a bit, thinking.

"Soldiers can't make political speeches in uniform," I said at last, "or write to the papers. Couldn't we just throw open the window, and you make a violent political speech?"

"That isn't any good," said Sympson, "because even as a civilian I should get run in for breaking the black-out. Of course I could just sit here and make a political speech to you...."

The idea did not appeal to me, and Sympson said that the only other thing he could think of was to get drunk. Private soldiers, he explained (remembering the Military Law lectures we had endured at our O.C.T.U.), were not allowed to get too drunk to "carry out any duty they might be called upon to perform," and officers were

not allowed to get drunk at all, officially. Civilians, on the other hand, could get as drunk as they liked so long as they did not make a nuisance of themselves.

"It seems a pity to waste the opportunity altogether," he said, "because I am afraid it may be quite a long time before we are civilians again. Let's get drunk."

I dissuaded him.

"We can't get drunk just for two minutes," I said, "and then sober up at precisely a minute past midnight, when we become officers. I suggest that we use the two minutes to write stiff letters to *The Times*."

Sympson said that nobody could write a letter to *The Times* in two minutes, and even if we did they had so little space nowadays that the letters probably wouldn't get in, unless they were about education or something equally obscure.

In the end we decided just to go to bed and hope we had civilian dreams during the two minutes.

"It seems a pity to waste the chance," he said, "but we must look on the bright side and hope we get a longer period as civilians between the time we are cashiered and the time we are called up again into the ranks."



"Don't get expensive seats, dear—there's no need to pay a penny more than what used to be 2/6."

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